



Updates to the Review Committee Composition in the University of Maryland Procedures for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading-- Undergraduate Students

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DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE

The University of Maryland Procedures for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading--Undergraduate Students has not been revised in more than a decade. In that time, the faculty body has changed significantly, primarily due to the creation of the Professional Track Faculty constituency. PTK faculty now shoulder the lion’s share of one of the institution’s core missions: providing an exceptional undergraduate education for the state’s “most promising students.”

The current procedures for reviewing allegations of arbitrary and capricious grading calls for a review committee composed of “at least three tenured faculty members at a rank equal or superior to that of the instructor.” This provision does not reflect the now-significant role played by PTK faculty in delivering undergraduate education. More importantly, it denies PTK faculty any participation in a process by which their conduct may be evaluated and adjudicated. Such a provision is incompatible with the principles of shared governance that underpin both the Policy on Shared Governance in the University System of Maryland and the Plan of Organization for Shared Governance at the University of Maryland, College Park.

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

Section D under “Procedures” should be amended to provide units the flexibility to include PTK faculty on review committees.

SUGGESTION FOR HOW YOUR PROPOSAL WOULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE

An appropriate committee should be charged with a review of the procedures to determine whether such a revision is advisable.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

An observation:

- At present, the definition of “arbitrary and capricious” does not encompass particular types of courses that clearly fit within the spirit of the procedures. For example, independent study sections where there are no other students against which to measure an instructor’s potentially different treatment, or where there is no syllabus or clear, codified expectations of what is expected of both the student and the instructor.